UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION
Ben Hill County

BEN HILL COUNTY AGRICULTURE NEWS

Detailed Forecast

Today	A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2pm. Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 95. Calm wind.
Tonight	A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly before 8pm. Partly cloudy, with a low around 75. Calm wind.
Tuesday	A 40 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2pm. Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 95. Heat index values as high as 100. Calm wind becoming west around 5 mph.
Tuesday Night	A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 2am. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 75. Calm wind.
Wednesday	Showers and thunderstorms likely after 2pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 92. Calm wind becoming west southwest around 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Wednesday Night	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly before 8pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 74. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Thursday	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly after 2pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 92. Chance of precipitation is 70%.
Thursday Night	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly before 8pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 73. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Friday	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly after 2pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 92. Chance of precipitation is 70%.
Friday Night	Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly before 8pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 74. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Saturday	Showers and thunderstorms likely. Partly sunny, with a high near 91. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Saturday Night	Showers and thunderstorms likely. Partly cloudy, with a low around 74. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
Sunday	Showers and thunderstorms likely. Mostly sunny, with a high near 93. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

(Forecast from The National Weather Station for Ben Hill County)

UGA Podcasts:

The Peanut and Cotton teams do a weekly or biweekly podcast that give real time updates. These podcasts are great to listen to while on a tractor or while driving. There is a lot of good information!

Link to **peanut** podcast page-

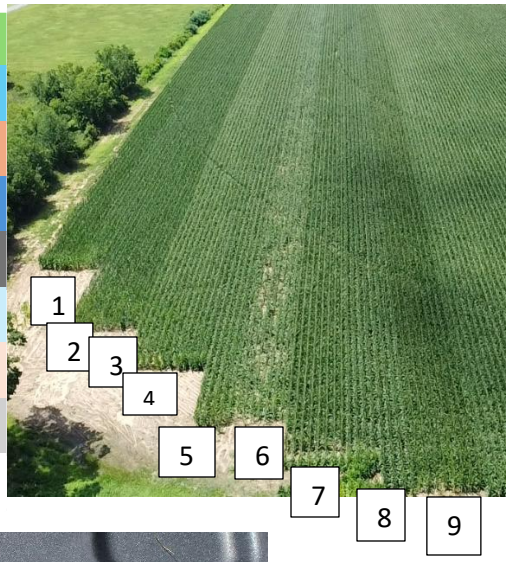
https://creators.spotify.com/pod/show/allaboutthepod/episodes/Episode-4--Season-2----Discussion-of-Grower-Meeting-Survey-Questions-Asked-at-Production-Meetings-e2vrrvh

Link to **cotton** podcast page

https://www.buzzsprout.com/2350262/episodes/16786065

Corn Variety Trial Update:

1	DKC 68-35 VT2P
2	DKC 70-42 VT2P
3	Agratech 704 VT2P
4	Agratech 85 VT2P
5	Revere 1839TC
6	Integra 6641SS
7	DG D57RR51
8	Pioneer 13777
9	Pioneer 17677



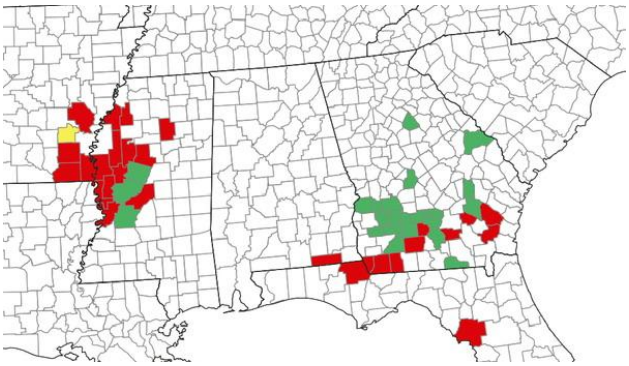
Corn Update:

Degree Days from UGA Weather Station in Tifton:

From March-1	To July-6	Total
2025	2025	2687
2024	2024	2670
2023	2023	2502
2022	2022	2671
50 <= Temp <= 86 °F		

Sap Beetle Damage:

The first picture is most likely **adult beetles** scraping the tops of the kernels. The second picture with hollowed out kernels is signs of the **immature or larvae stage**. **There is not much that can be done**. These beetles infest corn during mid-hard dough stage through **corn ear worm damage** (holes in husks). Insecticide applications may kill some sap beetles, but it will not kill them all and prevent future damage. Recommended insecticides have a **21-28 pre harvest interval.** Bt corn with the Vip trait, Trecepta, Leptra or Viptera, prevents corn earworm infestation which may minimize sap beetle infestations and damage.



Updated Southern Corn Rust Map:

We still have not located Southern Rust in the county, but other diseases such **as Northern Corn Lean Blight, Southern Corn Leaf Blight, and Common Rust (below)** are around.

Most of these diseases do not threat our production due to modern corn genetics tolerance. Northern Corn Leaf Blight has been known to cause devastating effects. Scouting is needed to know if fungicide applications are needed.

Common Rust:

Dark brown pustules

Northern Corn Leaf Blight:

Cigar/Large parallel lesions

Southern Corn Leaf Blight:

Narrow parallel lesions

Peanut Update:

July Peanut Insect Update: Dr. Mark Abney

It is the first of July, and the Georgia peanut crop is looking very good as a whole. Insect pressure has been average to this point in the season**. Lesser cornstalk borer (LCB)** has been the most serious and widespread insect issue of 2025 so far. Growers need to continue scouting fields for LCB even in **areas that have received ample rain.**

Later planting, skippy stands, sandy soil, and dry conditions are favorable for lesser cornstalk borer development; fields with these characteristics should be the focus of scouting efforts.

July is usually when we begin to see **foliage feeding caterpillars** in peanut in Georgia. 2025 is not the year for recreational caterpillar sprays. If a **field is at threshold, it should be treated**, but **spraying sub-threshold** caterpillar populations **just costs us money**.

The **threshold** for foliage feeding caterpillars ranges from **4 per foot if the peanuts are small or stressed; up to 8 caterpillars per foot when vines are healthy**, rank, and actively growing**. Properly identify any caterpillars we see**. Choosing the **wrong insecticide** when caterpillars reach threshold can be a **costly mistake.**

Other insects that we will likely begin to see more of this month include **three cornered alfalfa hopper**, **potato leaf hopper, and red-necked peanut worm**. These insects do not generally warrant an insecticide application, but if you see lots of them in a field it is a good idea to talk with your local UGA county Extension agent.

Peanut Fungicide Update: Dr. Kemerait

Questions about replacement for **chlorothalonil** in a peanut fungicide program. An interesting question as I am not sure why the grower would want to replace chlortothslonil. But here goes..

1. Early season, Absolute Maxx or Aproach Prima can replace a chlorothalonil application
2. Early season, an application of Lucento or Priaxor can replace two chlorothalonil applications
3. Later Provost Silver (and generic formulations) or Provysol + teb more than replaces chlorothslonil
4. Specific Albert Culbreath tested and approved formulations of micronized sulfur can replace chlorothslonil when tank mixed with 1) Excalia, 2) Elatus, 3) Umbra, 4) azoxystrobin, 5) tebuconazole, 6) pyrsclostrobin

5) chlorothalonil can be replaced by Alto on tank mixes **with** Excalia and Elatus

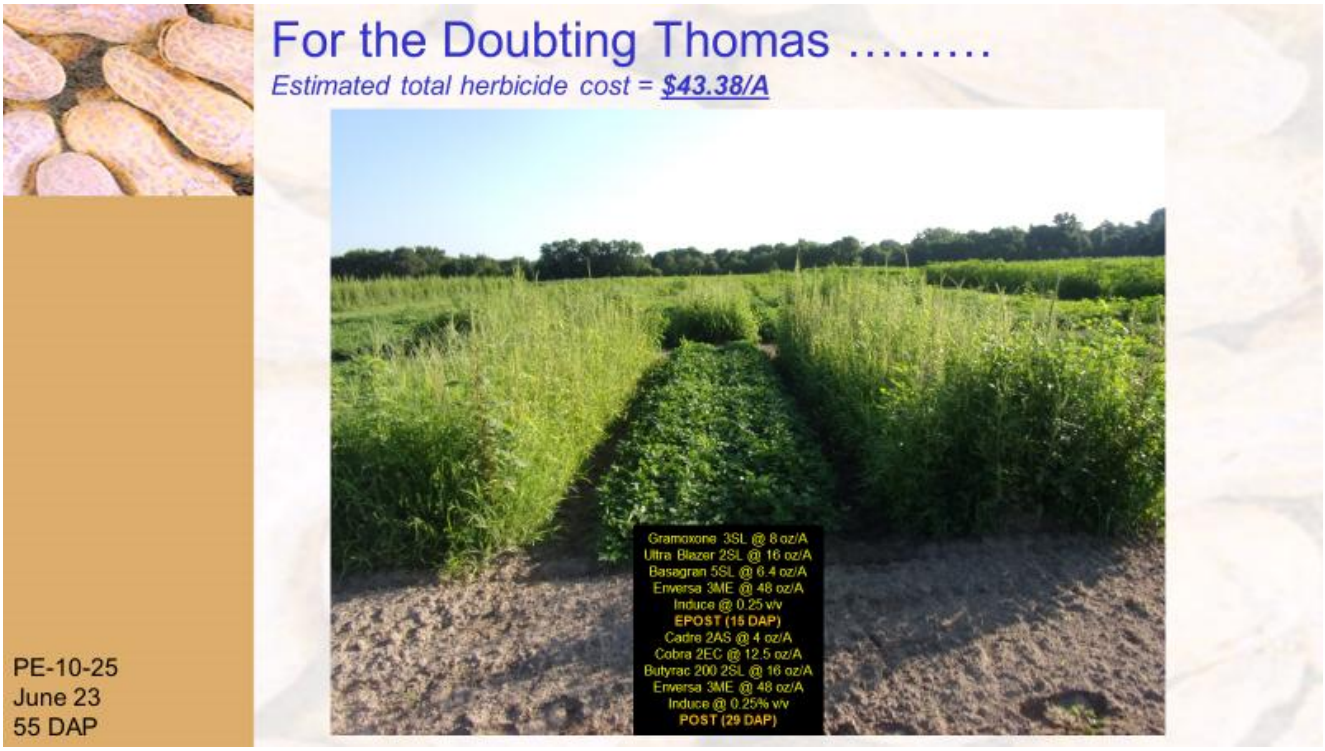
However- we truly cannot replace chlorothslonil from our peanut fungicide programs as it is the foundation of our plans to manage resistance for leaf spot to our other single-site mode of action fungicides.

Growing Degree Days for peanuts. April 10th planting date and May 10th planting date

From April-10	To July-6	Total
2025	2025	1679
2024	2024	1692
2023	2023	1456
2022	2022	1697
56 <= Temp <= 95 °F		

From May-10	To July-6	Total
2025	2025	1274
2024	2024	1264
2023	2023	1122
2022	2022	1309
56 <= Temp <= 95 °F		

Peanut weeds/herbicides update from Dr. Eric Prostko



Here is a quick picture from my research plots earlier today. Further proof **that herbicides work well when applied on time.** Generally, I do not have any preference for what **Group 15 herbicide is used in this EPOST + POST program** (Anthem Flex, Dual Magnum, Enversa, Outlook, Warrant, or Zidua). But, I would prefer that our growers **not tank-mix Anthem Flex with Cadre + Cobra + 2,4-DB (POST) at this time** (i.e., I need more data). Also, **please keep in mind that these are average prices and prices may be more or less depending upon the grower.**

Florida Beggarweed in Peanut (Dr. Prostko)

This is Florida beggarweed (**kidney-shaped cotyledons**). . Florida beggarweed tends to be a later emerging weed and prospers during **wetter** conditions.

At this point in the growing season, there **are not many good options for controlling Florida beggarweed in peanut.** The first option is a POST (**60 days after peanut emergence**) application of Classic (**chlorimuron**). The other option is to use Gramoxone (**paraquat**) in a **non-selective** applicator (**wiper, sponge, rope-wick**). Both of these options are described on page 224 of the 2025 UGA Pest Control Handbook and/or listed below. **Please carefully read the comment sections of these recommendations. Peanut cultivar tolerance to Classic is a major concern**. If a newer peanut cultivar is not listed in the comment section (i.e. Arnie, TifNV-HG, etc.), that **means I DO NOT have any tolerance data and have no clue what will happen**.

PEANUT WEED CONTROL

HERBICIDE	MOA	BROADCAST RATE/ACRE: AMOUNT OF FORMULATION/A	BROADCAST RATE/ACRE: LBS ACTIVE INGREDIENT/A	REI/PHI (Hours or Days)	REMARKS AND PRECAUTIONS
POSTEMERGENCE *(continued)*					
chlorimuron Classic 25DF	2	0.5 oz	0.008	12 H/ 45 D	Make one application per season as an over-the-top treatment for mid-season Florida beggarweed and bristly starbur control or suppression. Under favorable conditions—good soil moisture, moderate temperatures, and high relative humidity—other species such as cocklebur, ragweed, and sicklepod may be suppressed. Avoid applications during periods of drought/heat stress because of potential for poor weed control and crop injury. **Applications of Classic may not provide acceptable control of Florida beggarweed that has escaped control or is re-growing after a previous application of Cadre.** Include nonionic surfactant at 1 qt/100 gals spray solution with all Classic applications. Addition of *ammonium sulfate* (2 lb/A) or feed grade *urea* (2 gal/A) improves activity on bristly starbur. Classic can be applied from 60 days after peanut emergence to within 45 days of harvest. **APPLICATIONS OF CLASSIC APPLIED FROM 60 DAYS AFTER CROP EMERGENCE TO 45 DAYS BEFORE HARVEST MAY CAUSE A SLIGHT INCREASE IN TSWV SYMPTOMS.** Temporary yellowing of peanut foliage and reduction of canopy growth sometimes can occur. Can be tank-mixed with Bravo or *2,4-DB*. However, combinations of Classic + *2,4-DB* can result in significantly more foliar crop injury compared to Classic alone. Do not use on Spanish peanut. Do not tank-mix with elemental *sulfur*. **Rain-free period for Classic is 1 hour.** Classic should **NOT** be used on GA-06G or Tifguard due to potential yield losses (7–11%). The following peanut varieties have demonstrated adequate tolerance to Classic in UGA replicated/weed-free field trials: Florida-07; GA-Greener; GA-07W; GA-18RU, AUNPL-17, TIFNV High O/L, GA-20VHO, and FloRun™ 331. GA-09B yields were reduced 5% when Classic was applied 74 DAE but yields were not affected when applied at 60, 92, or 105 DAE. GA-16HO yields were reduced by 13% when applied at 70 DAE but not 60 DAE or 85 DAE. GA-12Y yields were reduced 7% when applied 60 DAE but not at 70 DAE or 85 DAE.
NON-SELECTIVE APPLICATOR (NSA)					
paraquat 2SL 3SL	22	50% solution (2 lb ai/gal) 33% solution (3 lb ai/gal)		24 H/ 30 D	For the salvage control/suppression of Palmer amaranth and Florida beggarweed. To prevent seed production in Palmer amaranth, apply within 2 weeks of pollen shed. Tractors should be operated at speeds of 5 MPH or less. NSAs that have performed well (> 85% control) in UGA tests include the following: GrassWorks Weed Wiper, Smucker's Top Crop Super Sponge, and LMC-Cross Wick-Bar. Do not apply more than 1 pt/A of a labeled *paraquat* formulation. In order for NSAs to be effective, at least 60–70% of the weed must be wicked/wiped. Additionally, this treatment may also be more effective on pigweed plants that are just starting to produce seed-heads. **Rain-free time is 30 minutes.** ****All applicators of *paraquat* must complete the EPA's training program before mixing, loading and applying Refer to the following web-site for more information:** https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/paraquat-dichloride-training-certified-applicators
HARVEST AID					

Cotton Update:

Some Things To Consider on this Cotton Crop:

1. **SCOUT**, I saw a **tarnished plant bug** last week in a cotton field, there are around. Only apply insecticide when plants are **retaining LESS THAN 80% of pinhead squares**. If using a **sweep net**, make sure it has a **15" diameter**!
2. **Mepiquat**: In **most irrigated fields**, we can begin low rate applications (4 oz) at least by second week of squaring, continue a 14-day interval for 3-4 applications. OR 8-12 oz at first bloom or just prior to bloom, with subsequent treatment (8-12 oz) 2-3 weeks later
3. **Mepiquat: In Dry land situations**, 8 oz at or prior to bloom if growth is vigorous. If growth continues to be aggressive, follow up treatments may be needed.
4. If the intent is to have a single or two application program, growers should **target** cotton in **16–24-inch range**. Once cotton gets above 30 inches, applications normally **do not** adequately control growth.
5. **Some varieties may not** need an aggressive rate of Mepiquat, it is important for growers to **monitor plant growth in all fields**

Rain-free Period for Selected Cotton Defoliants: From Cotton Production Guide

Product	Common Name	Rain-free Period[1]	Company
Aim	carfentrazone-ethyl	6 to 8 hours	FMC Corporation
Display	carfentrazone + fluthiacet	6 to 8 hours	FMC Corporation
Boll Buster	ethephon	6 hours	Loveland Products, Inc.
Boll'd	ethephon	6 hours	Winfield Solutions, LLC.
Ethephon 6	ethephon	6 hours	Arysta U.S.A.
Setup 6SL	ethephon	6 hours	ADAMA Group
Super Boll	ethephon	6 hours	Nufarm Americas Inc.
Finish 6 Pro	ethephon + cyclanilide	6 hours	Bayer CropScience
Resource	flumiclorac	1 hour	Valent U.S.A.
Blizzard	fluthiacet-methyl	1 hour	Chemtura
ET	pyraflufen ethyl	1 hour	Nichino America
Sharpen	saflufenacil	1 hour	BASF
Defol 5	sodium chlorate	24 hours	Drexel
Reviton	tiafenacil	1 hour	HELM Agro
Daze 4SC	thidiazuron	24 hours	Winfield Solutions
Freefall SC	thidiazuron	24 hours	Nufarm Americas
Klean-Pik 500SC	thidiazuron	24 hours	ADAMA Group
Takedown SC	thidiazuron	24 hours	Loveland Products
Thidiazuron 4SC	thidiazuron	24 hours	Arysta LifeScience
Adios	thidiazuron + diuron	12 hours	Arysta U.S.A.
Cutout	thidiazuron + diuron	12 hours	Nufarm Americas
Ginstar	thidiazuron + diuron	12 hours	Bayer CropScience
Redi-Pik 1.5EC	thidiazuron + diuron	12 hours	ADAMA Group
Folex	tribufos	1 hour	Amvac Chemical

[1]Expected rain-free periods are estimates only and other conditions, including temperature, moisture and crop status may play a role in product performance. See specific labels for more information.

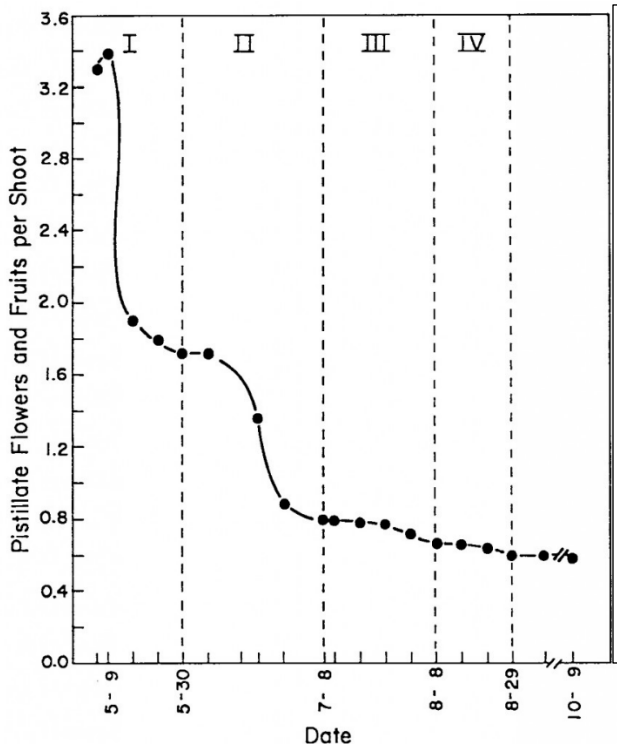
Table 8. Cotton Irrigation Schedule Suggested for High Yields

Crop Stage	Inches/Week	Inches/Day
Week beginning at 1st bloom	1.0	0.15
2nd week after 1st bloom	1.5	0.22
3rd week after 1st bloom	2.0	0.30
4th week after 1st bloom	2.0	0.30
5th week after 1st bloom	1.5	0.22
6th week after 1st bloom	1.5	0.22
7th week and beyond	1.0	0.15

Pecan Update: Dr. Lenny Wells

"Nut Drop, Leaf Samples"

We're seeing some nut drop out there at the moment across multiple varieties. Pawnee is quite noticeable but this is not unusual. Most of what we are seeing is a natural drop and is known as the "third drop". It typically begins just before rapid fruit expansion (abt 55 days after pollination) and is considered to result from failure of the endosperm to develop properly (Sparks, 1992). It is accentuated by self-pollination and drought, the latter of which hasn't been a problem this year. A certain percentage of the fruit will drop. That is the normal physiological process of the tree. Some years they may drop more than others but this typically stays within a moderate range of 30-50% of the nuts in a cluster. Trees with a heavy crop will look like they are losing more fruit but on a percentage basis it tends to fall within the range expected. Just bear in mind that though the nuts are dropping, the sky is not falling. Happens almost every year. Don't obsess over nuts on the ground when the trees still bear a good crop. Many will say at the moment "My trees are losing all their nuts", but once the nuts are fully sized they see that in fact, they still have a pretty good crop. Keep looking up.



Left figure taken from Sparks, D. 1992. Pecan Cultivars: The Orchard's Foundation.

During July we will also see a couple of pests that can lead to more nut drop. These include **shuckworm** and **nut curculio**. Use a targeted material like **Intrepid, Intrepid Edge, or Dimilin for shuckworm**. **Pyrethroid** applications right now **will flare aphids and mites** and lead to further sprays for these pests as well. If you have **curculio** I would look very closely at **the crop size and the amount of drop before pulling the trigger** on these. If you have a good crop, you can take a little drop from curculio and allow them to thin it for you. The lighter crop you have the more you must consider spraying. The issue is that you will have to spray a pyrethroid to get curculio and this will cause you problems with aphids and mites the rest of the season, which will get expensive , so be sure you have a serious enough problem with curculio before pulling the trigger on them.

"Scab Infection of 'Avalon' pecan in northeast Georgia orchard": Dr. Lenny Wells

A note from UGA Pecan Breeder Dr. Patrick Conner on a recent observation of scab on 'Avalon':

'Avalon' pecan was released in 2016 because of its high yields, good nut quality and excellent scab resistance in trial orchards. In the last five years 'Avalon' has become a widely planted pecan cultivar in Georgia and is being sold throughout the Southeast. Because its popularity is due in part to the reported high levels of scab resistance, recent indications of susceptibility to scab in some Georgia orchards are an important consideration for growers contemplating new 'Avalon' plantings and in managing existing 'Avalon' orchards.

This May I was notified of a **five-year-old 'Avalon'** orchard in northeast Georgia with a significant scab outbreak. The trees had never had fungicide sprays and had just begun to come into fruiting age. No scab had been observed in prior years, but scab was very evident on the first flushes of foliage throughout the orchard in 2025. Interestingly, a nearby orchard of '**Avalon' remains scab free**. The reported levels of scab were high enough that I originally considered whether there had been a mix up in the nursery trees. However, DNA testing a few trees indicated that they were, indeed, 'Avalon'. I travelled to the orchard in June, and scab was clearly visible on the leaves of most 'Avalon' trees (Fig. 1). After the initial consultation in May, the grower had begun applying fungicides and new foliage was much less infected. There is a fair number of fruit present on most trees, and they had little infection on them. However, they had not sized much, so it is too early to really know how much they will be affected. Talking with growers in southeast Georgia, I have also had reports of scab on 'Avalon' in this region. So far, it appears to be easily controlled with a moderate spray program but scab can be significant on unsprayed trees.

Things to consider:

1. growers really should consider applying a minimal spray program even on cultivars with reported good scab resistance and in young non-bearing orchards.
2. I would no longer consider 'Avalon' as a first-choice cultivar for homeowners or others looking to plant a tree or two and not spray for scab at all. I would go back to something like 'Elliott' that has a more proven track record of scab resistance over many years.

So, what has changed since the initial testing of 'Avalon' where little to no scab infection was reported? 'Avalon' has not "lost" its resistance to scab in the sense that the cultivar itself has changed. The 'Avalon' mother tree and test trees in our unsprayed trials remain scab free. However, one of the great challenges of breeding for scab resistance in pecan is that the causal organism, the fungus Venturia effusa, is not a monolithic organism. Rather it is composed of multiple strains of fungi, each with differing capacity to infect different pecan cultivars. Almost certainly these strains are also undergoing sexual reproduction and developing new strains all the time.

Given this situation, what are the recommendations for planting 'Avalon' going forward? Since we can only test new selections in a relatively small way both in terms of locations and years, we recommend they be planted on a trial basis until more can be known about their performance.

Cultivar recommendation in pecan is a difficult proposition because there are so many variable factors that come into play in the ultimate success of a given cultivar. Scab resistance is certainly an important factor, but is far from the only factor, and there are a lot of stops between a few sprays giving excellent control and needing to spray every 7 days to save your crop.

Extension Value added services:

There are several resources your county agent has access to for assisting the public:

- **SpotOn Digital Sprayer Calibrator & nozzle cleaner tool** - Accurate flow rate checking of individual sprayer nozzles.
    - **Fertilizer Spinner-Disc Spreader Calibration** - spread pattern testing of fertilizer spreaders.
    - **Hay Moisture Tester –** Evaluation and assessment of hay to bale at optimum moisture content - decrease mold growth and increase feed value. Test baled or unbaled (in field)
    - **Forced Motor Planter Calibration –** at-plant insecticide hopper box calibrations. Potential benefits: increase insecticide application efficacy with the appropriate and effective application of product label and recommended control rate. Decrease
    - **Mobile Irrigation Lab** – Pivot efficiency evaluation/Irrigation audits to support water conservation and decrease irrigation costs.
    - **Harvest Moisture Testing** – Corn and soybean moisture testing to decrease drying time and fuel costs.
    - **Enviroscape Watershed Model -** Environmental education programming tool. Interactive demonstration of the sources and effects of water pollution. Present and illustrate watershed/stormwater concept.
    - **Rainfall Simulator Tabletop Educational Program tool -**
    - **Digital wind meter educational tool** – Anemometer measures wind speed to support safe pesticide applications and reduce drift.
    - **Pivot Calibrations**
    - **Drone imagery/scouting**